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Essays, Expositions, &c.

THE FAITH ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.*

A Sermon preached at Bacup, at the formation of the North Western Association

By William Stokes, Manchester.

My beloved Brethren,—We are assembled this day for an important purpose, and under circumstances of unusual solemnity. For several years past, there has been spreading around us an indifference to the vital principles, and sacred ordinances, of "the glorious gospel of the blessed God," which threaten, if not checked in time, to eat away all that is distinctive in that gospel, and to leave to the churches but a name that they lived. This indifference was produced partly by a spirit of false charity, that overlooks those conditions of character, and those tests of faith, which Holy Scripture constantly demands; and partly by a desire to conciliate a proud, pharisaical world, at the expense of that stern fidelity to the Saviour, which, at all hazards and at all times, his redeemed people are required to maintain. This general indifference was growing from year to year with such rapidity, that the true friends of the cause of Divine truth felt that, unless a stand were made at once, and without farther delay, the whole body would be too much infected with the spreading disorder to admit of a remedy, and that nothing would remain, but quietly to lie down and die.

Therefore, acting upon the conviction that fidelity to your crucified Redeemer, and your pledged character to him and to his truth, demanded of you a separate action, in order to preserve the churches from the contagion by which they were threatened, you are assembled here this day. Allow me, then, to direct your meditations to the injunction of the Holy Spirit by Jude, in the third verse of his Epistle addressed to them that are "sanctified," "preserved," and "called,"—"*that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*" And may that blessed Spirit, by whom this great duty has been taught, write it upon our hearts, and graciously help us to maintain it to the end of life.

Whether this brief, but important epistle, was written, as some authorities contend, in the year 64 or 66, or, as some others affirm, so late as the year 90, is not our province to determine. Yet one thing is evident, that, at whatever period

* This sermon appears in the *Primitive Church Magazine* at the urgent request of brethren who heard it. The "History of Baptists," &c., will be resumed in our next number.

it was written, there were then most pernicious and destructive errors existing, which threatened the purity and success of the Christian cause; and that the apostle deemed it necessary to enjoin upon the saints the solemn duty of opposing those errors, by contending earnestly for that faith which had been committed to their care as the chosen followers of the Saviour. "For there are certain men," says this inspired writer in the fourth verse, "crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained [or surrendered] to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." The affectionate and tender-hearted apostle John also, in his first Epistle, bears a very similar testimony, when he says in his fourth chapter, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world..... And this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." Whether the errors here referred to were those of the *Gnostics*, who denied both the Divinity and the proper humanity of the Saviour;—or those of the *Nicolaitanes*, mentioned in the second chapter of the Revelations;—or those of *Cerinthus*, who advocated a compromise between the doctrines of Christ, and the errors of both Jews and Gnostics;—whether the one or the other of these heresies may be intended, it is evident, beyond all doubt, that the people of God were instructed to oppose them, by contending "earnestly for the faith" which they had received from above. In discharging this duty, it is of the greatest possible importance that we understand in the first place;

I. The nature of that "faith which was once delivered to the saints."

1. There is such a faith delivered, or communicated to the saints—consequently, it is not theirs, but another's. Were it their own, they could shape it, or qualify, it, or even part with it, to suit their own purposes. But it is not theirs—it being delivered to them by another. It is, therefore, his property, and not their own; and as none of us may trifle with the property of another, so none of us may trifle with this faith. It belongs to God, and not to man. It is entrusted or delivered to the saints, that they may take care of it for God. He deposits it in their keeping—consigns it to their vigilance—and as good as says, "Take care of this faith for me. I commit it to your fidelity. I place confidence in you, that you will preserve my property from harm. Robbers are about you—take care they do not steal it. My enemies are on the watch—keep your eyes open, and let them not sow tares among the wheat, and then have to boast that they did it 'while men slept.' This is *my* faith, containing the great truths affecting my kingdom, and your everlasting welfare. If you lose it, you are lost for ever; and if you impair it, I am dishonoured. Let it be your aim, therefore, to fight a good fight, to finish your course, *and to keep the faith.*"

2. It is delivered or communicated to the saints. This, consequently, determines both its origin and its true value. It is not the faith of man, but the faith of God. It is no discovery of the creature, but the pure revelation of the Most High. He might have left man to discover a faith for himself. He might have said to man,—"Go, there you have the book of nature; go, read its pages, and if you can, learn the way to heaven.—Go, there you have the book of Providence, full of all the dealings of God with man, in every clime, and in every age; study its readings, and learn from its teachings the way to a holier world.—Go, there you have the book of universal experience. There you have the wisdom of the sage, the learning of the scholar, the profundity of the philosopher, and the inspiration of the poet. Be these your teachers, and let them direct you, if they can, to God and heaven!"

What, had we been left to such instructors? What, had we received no better teaching? What should we have known of God or of Christ—of our own true condition, or of heaven, or of hell? Had we been left to these, as the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Romans were, it would have been as truly said of us, as of them, that "the world by wisdom knew not God." No, brethren, we are not abandoned to such false or defective lights, but we possess the unspeakable prize of a faith "once delivered to the saints."

3. This faith is delivered to the saints *but once*, or, as it might be interpreted, "once for all;" and delivered for every age down to the end of time. Therefore, it will not be repeated—not delivered over again. It is a complete and perfect faith, containing *all* the will of God. Therefore, woe to him that addeth to it, and an equal woe to him that taketh aught away. It is the only faith—the *final* faith of God. He will deliver no other. If this be lost, all is lost; for nothing can supply its place, and no other can come after to cover the loss. This faith once gone, is gone for ever; and nothing remains, but the dark intrigues of the father of lies, whose one sole aim it is to blind the minds of them that believe not.

4. This faith contains and enforces *doctrine to be believed, government to be obeyed*, and *positive institutes to be preserved and acknowledged*.

(1.) If we examine this faith in the light of doctrine, we discover its superlative excellence in its comprehensiveness and perfect completeness. By this faith we are taught to ascend to the fountain of being, the source of all truth, the spring-head of all knowledge, beyond which, only pride of intellect, or a guilty audacity, would desire to travel. Here we have the Eternal Father as the source of law, and the foundation of universal government;—here we have the Eternal Son acknowledging that law, and by an infinite obedience repairing the dishonour done to that government by the rebellions of a countless number of mankind;—and here we have the Eternal Spirit applying the merit of that obedience in the hallowed and indispensable work of regeneration and sanctification, that those very rebels may be presented faultless before the throne of God. Were there no baptismal ceremony to enjoin upon us the names of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, three equal Persons in one equal work;—had an inspired apostle never pronounced upon the church "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit;"—yet, in the work itself, undertaken by the sacred Three, we should have proof that a triune Jehovah, and that a Trinity in unity, was a doctrine inseparable from "the faith once delivered unto the saints." And what would be our hope without the eternal Father to love us, the eternal Son to redeem us, and the eternal Spirit to renew us into the holiness of God? What should we do without the Father as the Lawgiver, the Son as the Law-fulfiller, and the Spirit to mould us into all the perfection of that law? By the eternal Lawgiver we are condemned because of sin; by the Lawfulfiller that condemnation is removed, by the taking away of sin; and by the Spirit the removal of that condemnation is made the means of our salvation, by our renewing in righteousness and true holiness after the glorious image of the Holy One. Whether, therefore, we regard the nature of an infinite law,—or the infinite evil of sin, as a breach of that infinite law,—or the infinite depravity of which that sin has made us all the guilty partakers, we require God-like power in every stage of our recovery. If it be God who condemns, it is also God that justifies, and God that renews and sanctifies the heart. We have, consequently, a triune God in all. We have God the Father, who both condemns and pardons,—God the Son, who justifies and redeems,—and God the Holy Spirit, who renews and sanctifies. And these three Divine Persons constitute the one God of "the faith once delivered unto the saints."

And as we pass on through the whole system of doctrine communicated by this faith, we behold its God-like and perfect character in every truth which we are required to believe. We see a universe of "worlds framed by the word of God," and springing into being, yet "not made of things which do appear." In a part of that universe man is produced, and placed there as the great head of his race, the federal father of us all. He, the sole representative of his family, is made in the image of God in righteousness and true holiness,—endowed with all the perfection of a creature, possessing a complete ability to stand in his integrity, but free to fall, should he ever prefer sin to holiness, or Satan to his Divine Creator. We see him fall—not alone, nor for himself only, but with all his race; and we read the appalling truth in that awful wreck of man, that "in Adam all die;" and that "by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men unto condemnation." Following in the train of that

first transgressor, we see a world of transgressors—a whole race of rebels against the blessed God,—"none righteous, no, not one." The human family spreads out like some mighty river, becoming wider and wider, until the waters wash upon every shore, and lave the banks of every land. There they are—the children of Adam, wearing the family likeness in every clime—sinners everywhere, and not a saint among them all, "none seeking after God, but all gone out of the way, and altogether become unprofitable." And then it is, when ruin had fixed its heated brand-mark upon all that bore the name of man, we behold the interposition of a pre-determined counsel of love, appointing a second Adam as the great Restorer; that as in the first Adam, all belonging to him die, so in the new Adam, all belonging to him shall be made alive. In the fulness of time he appears, takes upon him our nature, is born into the midst of us, "made of a woman, made under the law." In him there is the human, certainly, or he could not represent the human;—in him there is the man, another Adam, a perfect Adam; but infinitely more, the root and offspring of David both in one. He comes forth as the Immanuel, "God with us," to unite the human and Divine in perfect love again, and to represent, in one adorable and mysterious coustitution, the God and the man,—the Lawgiver and the lawbreaker, and by meeting the full claims of both, to reconcile the sinner to the Holy One, that he might be a just God and a Saviour; and while he punished sin to its utmost desert, should be able on all the principles of justice, holiness, and truth, to save the believing sinner with an everlasting salvation. And who, according to "the faith delivered to the saints," could venture on this mighty work? Could a creature, though endowed with all the powers of an archangel—a Michael in dignity, sublimity, and love,—undertake this awful mission? Conscious of their incompetency,—aware of the presumption that would have characterized the imbecile attempt to cope with an Almighty justice, not one of all their holy ranks stood forth to challenge the mighty undertaking. Not one proposed to take the sinner's place, and to become a curse for him. They stood by and trembled, while their greater Lord engaged with the things which they "desired to look into." And he comes, possessing "the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" he comes, the Son of the Father's love, who alone, of all that were ever born of women, could say, "I and my Father are one." He appears, who, to put the question of his own Divinity for ever at rest, exclaimed, in language such as it would have been blasphemy for an archangel, a Moses, an Elijah, or a Paul to have uttered,—"He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. How sayest thou, then, shew us the Father?" Consequently, the Divinity of Christ is a fundamental doctrine of "the faith once delivered to the saints."

And the work now transferred to the Holy Spirit, with the all-wise arrangement which converts the kingdom of grace into "the dispensation of the Spirit," combines to demonstrate that he, too, is Divine. For is it likely, apart from all other proof—is it likely that the whole success of this amazing scheme of mercy would be entrusted to any other than a Divine Person? Divine love had originated the work in the "eternal council;" Divine power in the Person of Christ had magnified the law, brought in everlasting righteousness, and made an end of sin by the sacrifice of himself; and having conducted the operation so far towards completion—having made an infinite atonement by an infinite oblation—having paid an infinite debt by an infinite obedience,—would it have been consistent with the faintest ideas of propriety, to commit the success of the whole to incompetent hands at last? which would have been the case, had the Spirit, to whom it is now entrusted, been less than Divine. So far from this, it must be obvious to us all, that he who gives life, is God;—that he who creates, must be Divine;—and that he who has power over the grave to raise the dead, and overthrow death itself in its strongest holds, must be eternal. And all these works the Holy Spirit performs. He gives life, *divine life*, to sinners "dead in trespasses and sins;" he creates a new and holy nature in man, when by his sacred energy, man is born again and made a new creature in Christ Jesus;—and he exerts a resurrection power upon all who believe, when, "being risen with

Christ, they seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." Thus in the glorious work of redeeming love, we have God "all and in all." We have the Divine Father who loved us, the Divine Son who redeemed us, and the Divine Spirit who applies that redemption to our hearts. And when we survey these truths in all their majesty and greatness,—when we remember that they underlie all other truths, and that they are given by "the Spirit who searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God,"—with all our hearts should we adore him, who hath delivered such a faith unto the saints.

The doctrine of a triune Jehovah being thus established as the foundation work of the whole Divine administration revealed to the church of God by Holy Scripture, all other parts of the system fall naturally into their proper places, as portions of the faith with which the saints are blessed. The accomplishment of a special, distinct, and purposed work in redemption, as the fruit of an everlasting love which effectually draws its chosen objects to repentance and faith, throughout all ages down to the end of time,—the covenant of grace made with Christ, the second Adam, in lieu of the covenant of works made with the first Adam in the garden of Eden, and which, by sin, has been broken by all mankind, and the consequent total depravity of our whole race,—justification by faith through the imputed righteousness of Christ Jesus,—pardon and reconciliation to God by the blood of the cross,—regeneration and holiness by the Holy Spirit in the believer's heart,—everlasting security in Christ, so that his sheep shall never perish,—the responsibility of man to his Almighty Ruler,—the resurrection of the dead,—the final judgment,—the everlasting happiness of the saints,—and the everlasting misery of the wicked;—these, with some few other points that spring out of them, constitute the doctrines taught by the "faith once delivered unto the saints." Concerning them all it may very properly be spoken, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

(2.) This faith reveals *a government to be obeyed*. The doctrines are principles—practices are their fruits; and while it is incontrovertibly true that "faith without works is dead," it is no less true that works without faith can never exist at all. As well may you expect the fruit without the tree, as good works—works at all deserving the name—without faith. Hence it is a scriptural axiom that "without faith it is impossible to please God." But why impossible? For this simple reason, that where there is no adequate recognition of God, and no corresponding confidence in him, which acts are essential to true faith,—works are performed from regard to the creature, and not from regard to God at all, or but indirectly. How, then, can he be pleased with those actions which have no reference to himself, or where the reference to him is but remote and secondary? He requires the first place in human hearts; and as faith alone can secure him that, it becomes infallibly true, that "without faith it is impossible to please him."

Yet this faith is a living principle—a principle of living allegiance to acknowledged government—a principle of loyal patriotism to the Sovereign King. It regards that King as made "Head over all things unto the church." It contemplates his rule as supreme and universal, and being zealous to obey, it listens to the first whispers of his authority. If it hears his voice declaring, "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren," then it discards all superiority, and is content to be "less than the least of all saints." If he enjoins, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world," this faith responds, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." If he commands, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is," this faith travels with vigour to his house, loves to be where two or three are gathered together in his name; and deems a doorkeeper's place in that house as preferable to palaced splendour where he is not. If he claims for his church as the house of God, that it should be "the pillar and ground of the truth," this faith will be concerned to keep out of that house whatever is not truth, and will study that "wood, hay, stubble," do not pollute the house of the great King. And if he commands, "Love your enemies,

do good to them that hate you,"—"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good," this faith will so adapt itself to the presence of evil in every form of opposition, as to prove that by the gentleness of Christ, and with weapons not carnal, but mighty through God, it will overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil.

The faith delivered to the saints thus recognizing a government to be obeyed, will produce three direct results; first, It will produce *personal sacrifice to the Saviour's service*. The true believer, by the action of this faith, will regard himself, his time, his talents, his influence, and all that he hath, as the Saviour's sole property, as his purchased possession, as the temple of God, to be sacredly reserved for his earthly dwelling place. To him he will deem it his highest honour to be devoted; for him he will cheerfully labour; and whenever required, at his feet he will gladly lie down and die. The second result will be, *an ardent attachment to his cause and people*. With these, this faith will evermore identify its possessor. Hence Christian churches will be formed, partly to promote each other's individual welfare, by mutual oversight and by mutual prayer; and partly to preserve, in their associated capacity, the faith which has made them what they are. Brethren thus associated, recognizing the gospel law of subordination, will consent to government as necessary to the efficient action of the whole body. And then they will have to determine, by the enactments of this faith, whether they are to be governed by pastors and deacons, chosen from among themselves, on the sole ground of official fitness, according to apostolic pattern and example; or by popes and cardinals; by archbishops, bishops, deans, sub-deans, and rural deans; by proctors, rectors, vicars, curates, and other officials, who are found anywhere but in "the faith once delivered to the saints". A third result will be, *an acknowledgment of the Saviour, as the only Legislator in his own church*. This faith evermore regards him as the King, and the *sole King* over his own people. While rendering unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, it will stoutly refuse to render unto Cæsar the things that are God's. It will regard its own King as its own Almighty Defender, and it will scorn to write "Defender of the faith" upon a crown worn by any other head. And while recognizing the Saviour's authority, which is that of love, perfect love, it will abominate the very idea of supporting even the Saviour's cause by means which dishonour that Saviour's character. Consequently, where this pure faith prevails, no tithes, or church rates, or Easter dues, will be enforced by the constable's staff, to support a religion which condemns all violence. No widow's Bible will be sold to maintain the political rights of Christ's official representative. The law of this faith is one, uniform, undeviating law of love—"Freely ye have received—freely give." All else than this law is from beneath, and not from above. And it is but the enlargement of this principle, or rather its more extended application, that claims the sole headship for Christ, by denying among individual churches any headship over one another. A large church, a numerous church, a wealthy church, has no power whatever over a smaller or a poorer one; for the headship of Christ as much belongs to a church of three, as to one of three hundred members; and any attempt at government of the one over the other, is so far as it extends, a virtual dethronement of the great Head of the church. If strong and affluent churches can assist their weaker neighbours to keep alive the Saviour's ordinances among them, and to extend his cause, it is their duty to do so with a generous zeal, on the legislative principle, that "such as are strong should bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves." But when they proceed to govern another body, and to legislate where they should only assist, they assume a prerogative that belongs exclusively to the Saviour, and prove themselves Papists in spirit, however they may deny the name. To domineer over one another's faith, or to assume mastership where all are "brethren," is, therefore, utterly repugnant to "the faith once delivered unto the saints."

3. This faith contains and enforces *positive institutes to be preserved and acknowledged to the end of time*. Unlike the Mosaic economy, which was encumbered with the multiplicity of its institutes, this noble faith appears before us recommended by the simplicity of the appeal which it makes to the outward

senses. It enjoins no splendid priestly ritual—no sacerdotal display to astonish or to awe a prostrate multitude—no elaborate tabernacle service, whose ceremonial observances constituted a yoke which the fathers were scarcely able to bear,—but it makes its appeal to the outward man in the two plain, unpretending, but pregnant institutes of baptism and the Lord's-supper. There are none besides; and because no more, all the greater importance attaches to the only two which are enforced on our attention.

And as representative institutes, they are both alike solemnly important. They are equally full of meaning, and the things they typify are too vast in their significance to allow of levity in the employment of the types. Of all solemn events, death is the most solemn, and both these institutes are identified with death in One whom it is among the first of crimes to forget. If we speak of baptism, "are we not by baptism "buried with Christ unto death, that like as he was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life?" If we speak of baptism—speak we not of Him who "to fulfil all righteousness," himself descended into the waters of Jordan, and by this expressive emblem, died to the old economy, that, in coming up out of the water, he might rise and live again, to a new and better dispensation? Are we, then, to be accounted as bigots because we rigidly adhere to the example of him who is Lord of all? And if we insist upon baptism, what is it but that we insist upon the perpetuity of the command "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost?" Standing forth prominently, as this law does, in "the faith once delivered unto the saints," we cannot neglect that law but by impairing the faith to which it belongs; and who are we, that "what God hath joined together," we should dare to "put asunder?" In the same way we should argue, were it necessary, for the Lord's supper, in which we "shew the Lord's death till he come." Death is the significant principle in both of these institutes. In the one by a watery grave, and in the other by a broken body and the shed blood. And as the type in the one represents the body and the blood, both alike emblematical of death and of life again, so the type in the other represents death, burial, and resurrection. In the one it is by plunging, or dipping, without which there can be no grave, no burial, no resurrection, and in the other by eating and drinking, or in other words, receiving death—the death of Christ—that we may live.

Consequently, infant-sprinkling is not baptism—for this plain reason, that no death is there—no grave—no resurrection. It is an unmeaning ceremony, not known until degenerate influences had corrupted "the faith once delivered unto the saints." In that faith it has never yet found a place except by inference, and no institution can ever become "positive" by inference. At the very best, "inference" can never rise above the "doubtful," and it becomes not the manly character of our noble Christianity to adopt as "positive," that which is no more than "doubtful," and then to demand for that doubtful creation the positive obedience of mankind. The faith for which we are to contend rises far above the region of the doubtful, in making its appeal to intelligence. Hence it teaches first, and baptizes afterwards, for so has Christ ordained the law. But worldly wisdom, improving upon that which is Divine, sprinkles first, and teaches afterwards. Hence the contrast between the church as it ought to be and the church as it is, in the one it consists of baptized believers—of men and women who understand *why* they are baptized,—but in that of carnal wisdom it is composed of sprinkled, untaught babes!

Believing baptism to intend a representation of death, it is only a common fidelity to the faith of the saints to insist upon it as the sole entrance to the church of Christ, and the only appointed mode of approach to the Lord's table. In truth, the Lord's church and the Lord's table should be identical; and it is beyond all question that in apostolic days they were never divided. The plea for admitting to the one without a legitimate entrance by the other, is, comparatively, a "modern invention," not anywhere to be found in the ancient faith of the saints. Yet this is "open communion," or dispensing with a law, which the parties

do good to them that hate you,"—"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good," this faith will so adapt itself to the presence of evil in every form of opposition, as to prove that by the gentleness of Christ, and with weapons not carnal, but mighty through God, it will overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil.

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(3.) This faith contains and enforces *positive institutes to be preserved and acknowledged to the end of time.* Unlike the Mosaic economy, which was encumbered with the multiplicity of its institutes, this noble faith appears before us recommended by the simplicity of the appeal which it makes to the outward

senses. It enjoins no splendid priestly ritual—no sacerdotal display to astonish or to awe a prostrate multitude—no elaborate tabernacle service, whose ceremonial observances constituted a yoke which the fathers were scarcely able to bear,—but it makes its appeal to the outward man in the two plain, unpretending, but pregnant institutes of baptism and the Lord's-supper. There are none besides; and because no more, all the greater importance attaches to the only two which are enforced on our attention.

And as representative institutes, they are both alike solemnly important. They are equally full of meaning, and the things they typify are too vast in their significance to allow of levity in the employment of the types. Of all solemn events, death is the most solemn, and both these institutes are identified with death in One whom it is among the first of crimes to forget. If we speak of baptism,—are we not by baptism "buried with Christ unto death, that like as he was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life?"—If we speak of baptism—speak we not of Him who "to fulfil all righteousness," himself descended into the waters of Jordan, and by this expressive emblem, died to the old economy, that, in coming up out of the water, he might rise and live again, to a new and better dispensation? Are we, then, to be accounted as bigots because we rigidly adhere to the example of him who is Lord of all?—And if we insist upon baptism, what is it but that we insist upon the perpetuity of the command "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost?" Standing forth prominently, as this law does, in "the faith once delivered unto the saints," we cannot neglect that law but by impairing the faith to which it belongs; and who are we, that "what God hath joined together," we should dare to "put asunder?" In the same way we should argue, were it necessary, for the Lord's-supper, in which we "shew the Lord's death till he come." Death is the significant principle in both of these institutes. In the one by a watery grave, and in the other by a broken body and the shed blood. And as the type in the one represents the body and the blood, both alike emblematical of death and of life again, so the type in the other represents death, burial, and resurrection. In the one it is by plunging, or dipping, without which there can be no grave, no burial, no resurrection,—and in the other by eating and drinking, or in other words, receiving death—the death of Christ—that we may live.

Consequently, infant-sprinkling is not baptism—for this plain reason, that no death is there—no grave—no resurrection. It is an unmeaning ceremony, not known until degenerate influences had corrupted "the faith once delivered unto the saints." In that faith it has never yet found a place except by inference, and no institution can ever become "positive" by inference. At the very best, "inference" can never rise above the "doubtful," and it beseems not the manly character of our noble Christianity to adopt as "positive" that which is no more than "doubtful," and then to demand for that doubtful creation the positive obedience of mankind. The faith for which we are to contend rises far above the region of the doubtful, in making its appeal to intelligence. Hence it teaches first, and baptizes afterwards, for so has Christ ordained the law. But worldly wisdom, improving upon that which is Divine, sprinkles first, and teaches afterwards. Hence the contrast between the church as it ought to be and the church as it is,—in the one it consists of baptized believers—of men and women who understand *why* they are baptized,—but in that of carnal wisdom it is composed of sprinkled, untaught babes!

Believing baptism to intend a representation of death, it is only a common fidelity to the faith of the saints to insist upon it as the sole entrance to the church of Christ, and the only appointed mode of approach to the Lord's-table. In truth, the Lord's church and the Lord's-table should be identical; and it is beyond all question that in apostolic days they were never divided. The plea for admitting to the one without a legitimate entrance by the other, is, comparatively, a "modern invention," not anywhere to be found in the ancient faith of the saints. Yet this is "open communion," or dispensing with a law, which the parties

who plead for that communion admit to be of perpetual obligation. But why open any door which Christ himself has not opened? Why admit to his table those, who in a great particular of duty, have not submitted to his authority? Have we, who but serve in the household, any power to change the rules of the Divine Master? Are servants, even in human families, permitted to alter or dispense with the fixed regulations of the household? And would any master who retains a spark of self-respect, consent to such an invasion upon his own prerogative, on the part of any of his menials? Or are subjects at liberty to evade or change the laws of the state, at their own caprice? Would this be considered loyalty to the monarch, or patriotic towards the people at large? If, then, we differ on this point from brethren, whom in other respects we highly esteem, we plead allegiance to our Lord as our only reason. His law is imperative—baptize them into the church of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and then take them to the table. Against any other course, we must make a bold, a determined, and a constant protest.

It is also to be remarked that in taking this position on behalf of the communion of saints, we do no more than other Christian sects are doing on the same subject. Among them all, baptism, according to their belief of it, is required as a condition of their communion at the Lord's-table. Our Episcopalian friends would not admit to that communion an unbaptized person (according to their idea of baptism) on any earthly account. So our Independent brethren—so the Wesleyans—so the Presbyterians, and even the Society of Friends have their own mode of testing the character of those under "convincement," which among them, and with their views, amounts, practically, to a similar condition with baptism among ourselves, and with that particular test they will not dispense, for any reason whatever.—And so "strict" were *all* the sects who formed the Evangelical Alliance, Churchmen, Independents, Open Communion Baptists, Wesleyans and others, that when they framed the platform of that union, they excluded the Society of Friends by the test which they imposed, which was but a public declaration, on their part, that they could not hold communion with the unbaptized. With examples such as these around us in every direction, brethren, let us take courage. Our friends of other sects will not dispense with baptism at the Lord's-table; let us, therefore, be as firm, as honest, and as faithful to our principles as they are. They rigidly adhere to their convictions, and we believe them to be too candid and liberal to fix upon our conduct this day the charge of bigotry, when we are but copying their own example. In every portion of the church where baptism in some form or other is regarded at all, it is held to be an indispensable condition of communion at the Lord's-table: by one small section alone is this gospel rule discarded, and that is found, we grieve to say, among Baptists themselves. In this one particular the open communion Baptists are the most unscriptural people upon the face of the earth.

I have now presented you with an outline of the faith once delivered to the saints, in its doctrine, its government, and its institutes. This faith, we rejoice to know, has been preserved and maintained with more care and watchfulness by the Baptists, than by any other section of the wide spread church of Christ. Our pious forefathers in the faith, who formed the Midland Association, in 1655, published their belief in an excellent compendium of sixteen articles, in which they boldly affirmed their attachment to the same great truths for which we contend so earnestly this very day. In articles fourteen and fifteen, they express themselves thus:—

"14th. That this baptizing is not by sprinkling, but dipping of the persons in the water, representing the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Rom. vi. 3, 4; Col. ii. 12; Acts viii. 38, 39.

"15th. That persons so baptized, ought, by free consent, to walk together, as God shall give opportunity, in distinct churches, or assemblies of Zion, continuing in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayers, as fellow-members caring one for another, according to the will of God. All these ordinances of Christ are enjoined to his church, being to be observed till his second coming, which we all ought diligently to wait for."

In 1689, thirty-four years after the formation of the Midland Association, more than one hundred Baptist churches assembled in London by their representatives, and adopted, and afterwards published one of the most lucid and scriptural confessions of faith, that had ever been given to the world. It is in truth a complete body of divinity; and for clearness, comprehensiveness, and close adherence to Scripture, stands without a parallel among the productions of uninspired men. Our members generally, and our young members in particular, should make themselves thoroughly acquainted with that excellent confession of faith. Its thirty-two articles contain more of solid gospel truth than has been put into print by other works throughout the present century. And another compendium of great excellence and clearness, prepared by our venerated brother, Mr. Harbottle, has been adopted by this association, and issued by you at your preliminary meeting at Sunnyside, held last year. May we ever be true and faithful to the great doctrines contained in that statement; and may those who shall come after us be watchful and zealous to preserve "the faith once delivered unto the saints," that the Baptists of the latter ages may increasingly resemble the Baptists of that purer period when John baptized the Lord from heaven, and when Peter, Paul, and all the apostles went forth as Baptists, to baptize a believing world.

On one or two other points suggested by the text, I can offer but a few brief remarks. We notice—

II. The implied dangers to which the faith of the saints is constantly exposed.

1. It is exposed to the perpetual hostility and insidious attacks of Satan. He, the father of falsehood, is ever on the watch to destroy or undermine this faith. His hostility and hatred are ever directed against whatever is adapted to exalt the Saviour. He hates Christ with a perfect hatred, and his unwearied exertions aim at the one point of dethroning him in the hearts of men, or of keeping them in darkness concerning him, "lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." Our great poet Milton, probably, was right in his conjecture, that envy of the Son of God originated the rebellion of Satan in heaven. After describing, in his own sublime manner, the exaltation and headship of the Son by his eternal Father, and the new-born joy which that appointment gave to all the throngs of those noble spirits who kept their first estate, the poet proceeds:—

"But not so wak'd
Satan.....he of the first,
If not the first archangel, great in power,
In favour and pre-eminence, yet fraught
With envy against the Son of God, that day
Honour'd by his great Father, and proclaim'd
Messiah King anointed, could not bear
Through pride that sight, and thought himself impaired.
Deep malice then conceiving and disdain,
Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour,
Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolv'd
With all his legions to dislodge, and leave
Unworshipp'd, unobeyed, the throne supreme,
Contemptuous;——" *Book 5.*

The subsequent history of that fallen spirit and all his attempts on the human race, justify the poet's charge of envy against the Messiah as the ruling passion in that Satanic breast. He began his falsehood with Eve in Paradise, and with terrible success prevailed with her to believe him sooner than God. He corrupted the worship of God among the Jews, and made the fires of the son of Hinnom more popular than the worship of the great Jehovah. He enkindled the avarice of a Judas, to sell his Lord and Master for thirty pieces of paltry silver. He infused his falsehood into the hearts of Ananias and Sapphira, and prompted them to lie unto the Holy Spirit. With the doctrine of devils he has led away the nations from the worship of the Supreme to the worship of idols, and placed the god of war in the temple of the Prince of Peace. It is a glorious prophecy that he shall be shut up and shall deceive the nations no more until the symbolic period of the Revelations is fulfilled. But until then, brethren, be on your guard, for he "goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." He, probably, will not touch your money, or your lands, or your possessions; but he will damage that which should be dearer to you than all things else, "the faith once delivered unto the saints." Therefore, brethren, be "not ignorant of his devices;" or while you sleep the wolf will break in upon the fold and scatter the flock.

2. This faith is evermore in danger from false learning. "The first, and the

most fatal of all events to the primitive religion," says a modern writer, "was the setting up of a Christian academy at Alexandria." And the historian Mosheim, speaking of the beautiful simplicity of primitive Christianity, remarks upon the second century, that "this venerable simplicity was not, indeed, of a long duration; its beauty was gradually effaced by the laborious efforts of human learning, and the dark subtleties of imaginary science." Of all forms of pride the pride of intellect is the most pernicious, and when allowed to dictate in the church of God, produces heresy with an infallible certainty. Sanctified learning, that which bows with a deeper humility at the foot of the cross, that which consecrated the mighty intellect of a Paul to the exclusive service of a crucified Redeemer, and taught him to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ,—is a blessing both to its possessor and the church of God. But that false learning of which the mass of modern schools are proud, which affects to find something wrong in almost every text of Scripture, and which passes all gospel truth through the false fire of human reason, which demands to walk by sight and not by faith in God, is a great and a growing curse. If we value "the faith once delivered unto the saints," we shall honour the saint before the scholar, and count that the best learning that best feeds the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

3. This faith is liable to danger from a spirit of worldly conformity. The truths of this holy faith are hostile to "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of the life." They attack the world in its tenderest parts, and as a consequence, a struggle prevails between the two on the question of mastery. Then comes up the point, Which shall govern? Shall the world govern the faith, or shall the faith of God govern the world? And here lies the danger, for from the beginning the world has proposed a compromise as the most quiet and polite method of settling the dispute. And what follows upon a compromise but that you have the world in the church? Everything then must wear the garb of a worldly gentility. Your doctrines must never offend, and your services must cease to be singular. The plain Puritanism of your forefathers must be discarded, and the honest fidelity of a manly nonconformity must be considered as some Egyptian mummy of a departed age. And when you have resigned the most vital functions of the faith of the saints, what will the world render in exchange? You will then have doctrines to which the world will not object—music which the world will delight to hear—sights, and sounds, and ceremonies to which the world will nod a smiling assent; bazaars, concerts, and eloquent harangues, where the world may barter its fashions, exhibit its pride, and display its taste. You will have the world within, but Ichabod will be written upon the doors without.

4. This faith is endangered from a spirit of false liberality on the part of the church itself. A more noble specimen of Christianity in man, was never exhibited than that which appeared in the apostle Paul. Yet that great man could write, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Christian love was never more perfectly embodied in our common nature than in the apostle John. Affection, indeed, was his element, and his heart overflowed with the gentleness and tenderness of Christ. Yet even he could write, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed, for he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds." But will any charge upon these holy apostles a want of liberality? Will any man lay at their door the vulgar vice of narrow-mindedness? But if these inspired apostles were so jealous for "the faith once delivered unto the saints," shall other and far inferior men barter it away and then boast of their great religious generosity? Shall they tamper with this most sacred trust,—part with their master's property,—or allow the disobedient to "climb up some other way" into his sheepfold, and then pride themselves on the charity which they display? An easy virtue is such a charity as this—but a honest fidelity in guarding a trust committed to our care, is admitted by all men to be the best proof of an honest purpose. And in order to maintain such a purpose, although it may

expose us to the charge of uncharitableness, let us evermore remember the words of our Lord and Master, "Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

III. (Lastly.) The spirit in which this earnest contest for the faith should be conducted.

1. It should be conducted *intelligently*. When we contend for any object, we should fully understand what the object is for which we contend, or we may be intending one thing, and yet pursuing another. We should, therefore, distinctly and clearly perceive the faith for which we contend in this important struggle. But how shall we understand this faith, unless we study our Bibles? Where else shall we learn its nature? Where besides shall we become acquainted with the pure faith of the saints? That we may contend aright,—that we may know when the contest requires our efforts, and the distinct particulars for which we should earnestly contend, let us be solicitous to learn the faith from the word of God alone. There we possess it in all the purity of its doctrines,—there it is exhibited in all the solemnity of its government, and there it is enforced in all the simplicity of its institutes. To your Bibles, then, O Christians, if you would clearly know for what you are bound earnestly to contend.

2. This contest should be conducted *prayerfully*, and this on two accounts. First, that we may be Divinely directed and assisted in contending for the faith. Can we properly contend for the truth, unless we possess the Spirit of truth? And if we possess not the Spirit of truth, would it not be better that we did not contend at all? Will any other spirit do honour to such a holy cause? But how can we expect the Spirit of truth, unless we ardently pray for this heavenly gift? Secondly, a prayerful spirit will all the better prepare our own hearts for this sacred contest. We shall not then carry it on with levity, or pride, or anger, but with seriousness, gravity, and deep-toned sincerity, as it becometh those who speak for God. Breathing the spirit of heaven in the closet, we shall bring that spirit into this earnest contest; and when those with whom we have to contend for the faith of the saints, behold our simple earnestness, and our gentle demeanour, they will be constrained to admit that we are "speaking the truth in love."

3. It should be conducted with *mildness*. Ever remembering that "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God," we should lay aside all bitterness of words, all acerbity of feeling, and all rancour of spirit. In maintaining this important and necessary contest, it should be our constant aim to be both "wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

4. We should conduct this contest *firmly and courageously*. What fine examples of this spirit do we meet with in Holy Scripture of faithful boldness in the cause of God! How nobly courageous were Moses and Aaron before Pharoah, Samuel before Saul, and Nathan before David! How magnanimous the bearing of Elijah in the presence of a Ahab, Daniel towards Belshazzar, and the three children in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar, notwithstanding the threat of the burning fiery furnace! How firm and unflinching was Peter before the Jewish Sanhedrim, Stephen before the council, and Paul before Felix and Agrippa! And is not our cause the same? Therefore let not cowardice close our mouths, nor a guilty timidity seal our lips when called upon to contend for the faith of the saints; but in the presence of frowns, sarcasms, or threats, let us study to quit ourselves like men and be strong.

5. This contest should be conducted with *completeness*. We should not contend for the *doctrines* of this faith, while we despise or overlook its government. Neither should we plead for its government, and then neglect its institutes. We should contend "earnestly" for every part of it—not making idle distinctions such as a temporizing policy would advise. But remembing that every part of this faith is of God, we should contend earnestly for the *whole faith* as the property of Him "whose we are and whom we serve." Turning a deaf ear to that carnal spirit which would divide this faith into fragments—denominating some of them essential and others non-essential, as if the blessed God ever inspired a non-essential matter,—let us hold fast by the perfect truth of heaven, and contend earnestly

for the *whole* "faith once delivered to the saints."

6. We should conduct this contest with *perseverance and constancy*. As long as this faith has a single foe, should we stand by it as its fearless friends. Should the world or Satan appear to smile upon it, we should watch to preserve it from treachery; and should they frown and storm, we should adhere to it with unflinching fidelity. In the warmth of summer and the cold of winter;—amid the gentle breezes of prosperity or the stern blasts of adversity;—when youth and manhood nerve our arm, and when decaying age shall enfeeble our frame;—when wealth shall pour its plenty, and when poverty shall pinch us into want;—when life shall yield its joys, and when death shall bring its terrors;—in all companies, through all seasons, and at all times—be it our honour, and be it our aim, to stand by the faith of God,—and when each of us shall close our eyes in death, may we be able with apostolic faithfulness to exclaim, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, —*I have kept the faith*."

In conclusion, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation. Through the unmerited blessing of God, we have been permitted to begin well, and the circumstances attending our present meetings are fraught with cheering prospects for the future. Never, so far as we know, has any association of Baptists commenced with so much to encourage and so much to prompt to continued exertion in the cause of the "faith once delivered unto the saints." That considerably more than one thousand decided Baptists—indeed, nearly thirteen hundred members of Baptist churches should have united in this Association at its very first meeting, is a fact, we believe, unparalleled in the history of our denomination. And this, let it ever be borne in mind, has been done by the voluntary act of the churches themselves who have given in this adherence. No compulsion, or influence, or any other unworthy agency, has been employed to bring about this gratifying result. It has been their own free and deliberate decision. Surely, we are bound to thank God, and take courage.

And now, with earnest prayer, deep-toned piety, and unaffected humility—with a perpetual recognition of the Holy Spirit as the only source of success, and fervent and incessant supplication for his power and presence, let us go forward with the work of the North-Western Association. The eyes of thousands of brethren, far off and near—friendly and perhaps otherwise, will be directed to our movements. The million-and-a-quarter of Baptists in the United States, among whom the loose communion of this country meets with no proportionate encouragement, will hear of our name and purpose, and hail us as brethren who, like themselves, are labouring to establish the "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," in all the earth. The 200,000 baptized believers among the now emancipated slaves in the West India Islands, will be encouraged by our example to hold fast their integrity. The numerous Baptist churches in our own eastern counties, and in other parts, with our firm and faithful friends in Scotland, will rejoice to hear that, in this important part of the kingdom, there are so many who prefer an honest conviction to a fashionable custom. The churches in Sweden, among whom God has worked in a manner so remarkable, and who are looking to this country for encouragement in maintaining a Strict New Testament communion, in which they have hitherto proved themselves so honourably faithful, will be invigorated in that faithfulness when they hear of the stand you have made this day. And in looking on to the future, we discern a class whose characters we shall help to mould, and whose principles we shall do much to confirm. When we are no more—when we shall have mingled with the dust—our children and posterity around will revert with a holy satisfaction to our conduct now; and as they peruse the history of this important movement, many a son or daughter will rejoice to be able to declare, "My father helped to form the North-Western Association." But above all these, and far beyond the reach of present vision—there is One, who, though sitting on the throne of universal government as Head over all things unto the church, yet walketh among the golden candlesticks, and looks with an eye of affection on all his servants here. He has spoken in accents of love, and his voice has thrilled our souls, and nerved our hearts to every holy purpose, as the

words have rolled over us from the heavenly glory, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." He yet speaks—and as the promise wends its way to earth, angels bend to see how we this day receive the message, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."*

REMARKS ON TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE.—No. II.

GRACE AND WORKS.

"What shall we then say, that Abraham, our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."—Rom. iv. 1—3.

WHILE a man reasonably glories in the possession of some inestimable good, his glorying has respect not only to the good possessed, but also to the source whence it is derived, either as the gift of a benefactor or the fruit and reward of his own works. There is no higher ground of exultation than to be "just with God," and no greater good than to dwell in his presence. And such, according to abounding mercy, is the state and blessedness of the ungodly and the sinner who believes in Jesus. "In him," said the prophet, "all the seed of Israel shall be justified and shall glory." They are now the sons of God, and whom God adopts and justifies, them he also glorifies. Now Abraham having received "abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness," had the highest reason to rejoice and glory. But if he stood on the ground of his own merit, and were justified by his own works, his glorying could not have respect to God as the Author and Bestower of that in which he gloried. How then was he justified, by works or by grace? "What saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." His glorying, therefore, must have respect to God, who justified him freely by his grace, and not at all to his own works.

It may here be remarked that our translators, in rendering the phrase *pros theon*, in this passage, "before God," have not expressed its true meaning. As elsewhere, it should be rendered *towards God*, or in respect of God. Abraham's glorying, if he were justified by works, could have no respect to God as the Bestower of a justifying righteousness, but to his own works as the meritorious, procuring cause of his acceptance. In Acts xxiv. 15, Paul says, "We have hope *(pros theon)* toward God." In Rom. v. 1, we read, "Being justified by faith we have peace *(pros theon)* with (toward) God through our Lord Jesus Christ." This peace which passeth all understanding, as well as all other spiritual blessings, proceeds from God, and has respect to him as the just God and the Saviour; it is, then, peace toward God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Again, in Rom. xv. 17, the things done by Paul are said *(ta pros theon)* to pertain to God. God wrought by him to make the Gentiles obedient by word and by deed. He had, therefore, whereof he might glory through Jesus Christ, in those things which relate to God. Now, with respect to Abraham, his glorying as a justified person had, in like manner, respect to the grace of God who justifieth the ungodly, and in whom he accordingly believed.

God, by the Prophet Isaiah, said to Abraham's posterity, "Look unto the rock whence ye were hewn, and the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah that bare you; for I called him alone and blessed and increased him." Abraham had been an idolator, (Josh. xxiv. 2), a member of an idolatrous family, who, like many others, quickly forsook God for the service of dumb idols. Now all

* It has been suggested to print the above discourse in a neat book form, price two-pence. With this suggestion the author is willing to comply on the condition that not fewer than five hundred copies are ordered. All communications on the subject, stating the number of copies required, should be addressed *promptly* to the Editor, 71, Robert-street, C. on M., Manchester.

for the *whole* "faith once delivered to the saints."

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REMARKS ON TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE.—No. II.

Grace and Works.

"What shall we then say, that Abraham, our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."—Rom. iv. 1—3.

While a man reasonably glories in the possession of some inestimable good, his glorying has respect not only to the good possessed, but also to the source whence it is derived, either as the gift of a benefactor or the fruit and reward of his own works. There is no higher ground of exultation than to be "just with God," and no greater good than to dwell in his presence. And such, according to abounding mercy, is the state and blessedness of the ungodly and the sinner who believes in Jesus. "In him," said the prophet, "all the seed of Israel shall be justified and shall glory." They are now the sons of God, and whom God adopts and justifies, them he also glorifies. Now Abraham having received "abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness," had the highest reason to rejoice and glory. But if he stood on the ground of his own merit, and were justified by his own works, his glorying could not have respect to God as the Author and Bestower of that in which he gloried. How then was he justified, by works or by grace? "What saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." His glorying, therefore, must have respect to God, who justified him freely by his grace, and not at all to his own works.

It may here be remarked that our translators, in rendering the phrase *pros theon*, in this passage, "before God," have not expressed its true meaning. As elsewhere, it should be rendered *towards God*, or in respect of God. Abraham's glorying, if he were justified by works, could have no respect to God as the Bestower of a justifying righteousness, but to his own works as the meritorious, procuring cause of his acceptance. In Acts xxiv. 16, Paul says, "We have hope *(pros theon)* toward God." In Rom. v. 1, we read, "Being justified by faith we have peace *(pros theon)* with (toward) God through our Lord Jesus Christ." This peace which passeth all understanding, as well as all other spiritual blessings, proceeds from God, and has respect to him as the just God and the Saviour; it is, then, peace toward God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Again, in Rom. xv. 17, the things done by Paul are said *(pros theon)* to pertain to God. God wrought by him to make the Gentiles obedient by word and by deed. He had, therefore, whereof he might glory through Jesus Christ, in those things which relate to God. Now, with respect to Abraham, his glorying as a justified person had, in like manner, respect to the grace of God who justifieth the ungodly, and in whom he accordingly believed.

God, by the Prophet Isaiah, said to Abraham's posterity, "Look unto the rock whence ye were hewn, and the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah that bare you; for I called him alone and blessed and increased him." Abraham had been an idolator, (Josh. xxiv. 2), a member of an idolatrous family, who, like many others, quickly forsook God for the service of dumb idols. Now all

* It has been suggested to print the above discourse in a neat book form, price two-pence. With this suggestion the author is willing to comply on the condition that not fewer than five hundred copies are ordered. All communications on the subject, stating the number of copies required, should be addressed *promptly* to the Editor, 71, Robert-street, C. on M., Manchester.

idolators being wilfully estranged and ignorant, are utterly debased and "filled with all unrighteousness." From this state of utter ruin and debasement God called Abraham and blessed him, and, moreover, promised to make him a blessing. This was wonderful grace, rich undeserved mercy. "I will be thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." And thus now Christ "is made to us by God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, that according as it is written, 'Him that glorieth let him glory in the Lord.'"

Next to Abraham, who like David could speak of mercy and forgiveness? David sinned fearfully, and thereby displeased the God who "took vengeance of his inventions," while, in wonderful compassion, he forgave his great iniquity. What relief did David find from the anguish and the sorrow of his troubled heart, when Nathan told him, "The Lord hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die." He now sees and confesses the greatness of his sin, prays earnestly to God to blot out his iniquity and restore to him the joy of his salvation. How well did David, then, understand "the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputed righteousness without works." "Blessed," he exclaims "are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." And if God justifies, who will condemn? If he forgives and casts sin into the depth of the sea, who shall bring it up again? If the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, who shall charge those with guilt or crime for whom the Saviour died?

In no other light, we know, than in accordance with the preceding remarks, is the doctrine of the apostle viewed by those who believe to everlasting life. Yet they usually mistake the sense of the phrase *pros theon, toward or in respect of God*, which is necessary to express the full force and bearing of the apostle's argument. *In God's sight*, or *before God*, on the one hand, and *by his free grace and power*, on the other—express very different ideas. All things are done, all things of necessity exist before God or in his presence, whatever be their nature or origin; but to him alone we ascribe our salvation. In any commentary to which the writer has access, the phrase in question, namely, *pros theon*, is rendered in our translation to signify *before* or *in the sight of* God, which obscures the sense and weakens the apostle's argument. If this be admitted, the preceding remarks will not be deemed superfluous.

A. MACLEOD.

Glasgow.

Fragments and Choice Sayings.

WHY CAST DOWN?

Therefore let us shame ourselves. Is there such a storehouse of comfort and grace every way in Christ? Why are we so weak and comfortless? Why are we so dejected as if we had not such a rich husband? All our husband's riches are our's for our good—we receive of it in our measure. Why do we not go to the fountain and make use of it? Why, in the midst of abundance, are we poor and beggarly? Here we may see the misery of the world. Christ is a Prophet, to teach us the way to heaven, but how few be there that will be directed by him! Christ is a King to subdue all our spiritual and worst enemies, to subdue those enemies that kings tremble at, to subdue death, to subdue the fear of judgment and the wrath of God, and yet how few will come under his government! "Christ is the light of the world," John ix. 5; yet how few follow him! Christ is the way, yet how few tread in his steps! Christ is our wisdom and our riches, yet how few go to him to fetch any riches, but content themselves with the transitory things of this life! Men live as if Christ were nothing, or did nothing concerning them, as if he were a person abstracted from them, as if he were not a head or husband, as if he had received the Spirit only for himself and not for them, whereas all that is in Christ is for us. I beseech you, therefore, let us learn to know Christ better, and to make use of him.—*Richard Sibbes, D. D.*, 1635.

A Page for the Young.

A BIBLE DICTIONARY FOR YOUNG PERSONS. *(Continued.)*

RUTH.—This book commences with the year of the world 2692, and before the birth of Christ 1312. Its history covers about the space of ten years. Nothing can be more beautifully simple than this little but important history, and nothing can excel it for its unaffected pathos and plainness. In these four chapters God has taught us three great truths. First, that his providence will never forsake his true people. He provided for the family of Elimelech notwithstanding the famine, and directed the steps of Naomi when she became a widow. Second, that family affection will be rewarded, as it was in the case of Ruth. Third, that God did not despise and utterly cast away the Gentiles. Ruth was a Gentile, yet she became the great grand-mother of David, and remotely, the honoured Gentile mother of the Lord Jesus Christ. From the time of Ruth, the ancestors of the great Redeemer represented both the Jew and the Gentile, until Christ himself came, who broke down the "middle wall of partition between them."

1 SAMUEL.—This book contains the history of nearly eighty years, reckoning from the birth of Samuel to the death of Saul. It records some of the most astonishing events that ever took place upon earth. Among these are the birth and call of the child Samuel; the capture of God's ark by the Philistines; the restoration of the ark; the giving the first king the Jews ever had; Saul's wars, folly, and dealing with the witch of Endor; David's conquest of Goliath of Gath with a sling and stone, with his remarkable love to Jonathan; Saul's wickedness and miserable death. The entire book teaches that God will bless the righteous, but the way of the wicked he "turneth upside down." It descends to about 1056 years before Christ.

2 SAMUEL.—This book is appropriated to the history of David, which lasted forty years, so that the two books of Samuel cover an historic period of about one hundred and twenty years. In the first chapter of this book there is one of the most exquisite pieces of poetry in the whole world, which is David's lamentation over Saul and Jonathan. It has never been excelled, and perhaps never equalled. Nothing in modern times has approached it for grace, delicacy, and beauty. The book contains a number of other particulars respecting David's character and government, including both his faults and his faithfulness, and is eminently fitted to instruct those who read it, which we hope all our young friends will do, praying to God for his blessing. The book comes down to 1017 years before Christ.

(To be continued.)

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS IN THE MAY "PRIMITIVE CHURCH MAGAZINE."

Martha and *Mary*, aged respectively eleven and thirteen years, reply to question the 1st, by giving Proverbs xvi. 18. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." This answer is perfectly correct.

They reply to the 2nd question, by referring to Matt. xi. 7—11. This is not correct—therefore this question yet remains to be answered.

We are much obliged to these dear young people, and hope they will be encouraged to try at the second question once more, and forward their reply.

NEW QUESTIONS.

A great man was cured of the leprosy by dipping in a certain river;—how was this brought about, and by whom? And what remarkable punishment was connected with the case?

There is but one woman's age mentioned in the Bible;—who was it, and what was her age?

What dream was the means of saving a whole nation from death?

When was a sleepless night the means of saving a nation from destruction?

Correspondence.

C. WILLIAMS ON THE ATONEMENT.

To the Editor of the Primitive Church Magazine.

Sir,—In the review of a discourse called the "Word of Wisdom," (see *Primitive Church Magazine* for August, p. 187), the Reviewer appears to think the author of that discourse not sufficiently explicit in regard to his view of the doctrine of the atonement. In a four shilling volume published some time ago by the author of that same sermon, you will find the following which, most likely, you may think quite sufficiently explicit on the subject.

Aug. 7, 1862. A. B C.

"But against the legal view of the sacrifice of Christ, which says that he died—endured the desert of sin—that sinners might not be punished, this fatal objection lies. On such a principle, if this theory be true, there is no such thing as pardon. Remittal of penalty there may be; but not the forgiveness of sin. But even this remittal would be a mere act of justice. For if, "when his Substitute died there (on the cross) judicially, the sinner died there judicially," mercy has no place in Christianity. Grace in providing the Substitute would still abound; but pardon there would not be. Law having already "to the very jot and tittle," exacted its penalty, could make no additional demands. There being "nothing by the offended Lawgiver to be inflicted more," there can be "nothing by the offending transgressor ever more to be endured." What, then, is there to forgive? Justice, satisfied with the execution of the sentence of the law on the Substitute, has no claim against the sinner. But *what saith (say) the Scriptures?* There we read of God *forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin;* are taught by the Saviour himself to pray, *Forgive us our trespasses;* and are repeatedly reminded of the *mercy* exercised by God in pardoning us. From this it is evident THAT CHRIST DID NOT SETTLE OUR ACCOUNT WITH GOD—DID NOT MEET THE LEGAL CLAIM UPON US—DID NOT IN HIS WORK PAY TO LAW THAT WHICH WE OWED. To the present day our sins are unpunished; and in forgiving, God saves from a wrath yet impending over the guilty. In a word, I reject the legal view of the death of Christ; not on *à priori* grounds, but simply and exclusively because on examination I find it alike contrary to the statements of Scripture and to fact."—*"The Sacrifice of Christ: an Inquiry into the fact and the doctrine of the Christian Atonement. By* CHARLES WILLIAMS, *of Accrington."* Pp. 137, 138.

P. S. The Editors of the Baptist Magazine (for May this year, I believe) express their gladness that Mr. W.'s views have so little "divergence" from theirs!!! Are they aware of what he has said in this volume?

Reviews.

The Duties and Prospects of the Baptists: a Discourse delivered in Berwick-street Chapel, Newcastle-on-Tyne, on Sunday evening, May 25, 1862. By WILLIAM WALTERS. Published by request. London: J. Heaton and Son, 21, Warwick-lane. Newcastle: A. M'Cullum. Fourth thousand. Pp. 16.

Judging by the safe rule of utility, we have no hesitation in pronouncing this discourse to be one of the most valuable for its compass hitherto published on baptismal questions. It is calm, conciliatory, and faithful. While studiously avoiding dogmatism, Mr. Walters is both firm and decided, and he has brought to bear on his main issue an amount of argument and persuasion that we do not remember to have seen in so small a compass before.

On the charges to which we are exposed from faithfulness to our principles, the author remarks, with great effect, that—

"It is said that we make too much of baptism—that we give it undue prominence, and that we attach to it too much importance. This charge comes with a bad grace

from those who prefer it. Moreover, we deny it altogether. I sometimes fear that, in avoiding one extreme, we go to the other, and make too little of baptism. At all events, *we* never teach the doctrine of baptismal regeneration; *we* never say that baptism washes away sin, either original or actual; *we* never represent it as instrumental in the implantation of the seed of grace in the heart; *we* never talk of its placing persons in the covenant, neither do we ever call it a seal of the covenant; *we* never hasten to administer it to a dying child, lest perchance that child should pass into eternity in an endangered condition. We attach no saving efficacy to the water you see in that font, and in which our friends are about to be immersed as a profession of their faith in Christ. All we teach concerning baptism is, that it is a command given by our Lord, and that, in our obedience to that command, we profess our faith in him, express our love to him, symbolize our death to sin and our resurrection to a life of holiness, and in all this render '*the answer of a good conscience towards God.*'—p. 6.

We commend the above to that numerous class of opponents who, having nothing better to urge against us, charge upon us a sort of idolatrous devotion to an outward rite. We simply *obey*, and if the charge should ever be repeated, we beg to remind the accusers of the old command—"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."

The following counsel is both timely and valuable, and we urge its importance on all our readers:—

"A great responsibility rests on those Baptists whom Divine Providence has placed in localities where our faith and practice are little known. Too often such persons think it their duty to unite with churches of other denominations; and by this means they hide the light under a bushel, which should display its radiant lustre amid the surrounding darkness. Many circumstances may contribute to such a course of conduct—a desire for Christian communion—an unwillingness to interfere with existing religious societies in the neighbourhood—a dread of taking the lead and the responsibility of establishing a new cause—even a love of ease, and a reluctance to contribute the necessary funds for the establishment and maintenance of an infant church and congregation. Persons so situated should, however, at once display their colours; and working from themselves outwards, they should bring all the necessary appliances into play for spreading their sentiments. If two or three can unite, they should hold meetings for worship and instruction, and as often as possible secure the services of some well-known minister of the denomination to preach for them. Thus they should continue diligently to labour, and patiently to wait for enlargement. It was in this way that our principles were first planted in many of those spots where now they are most flourishing and fruitful; and it can only be in this way, humanly speaking, that they are to be planted in most of thosedistricts where as yet they have not taken root."—p. 8.

Precisely so, and we go a step further and say, *whatever the consequences*, never lower your standard, never be ashamed of the gospel law. Nothing was ever yet gained by a compromise, and never will be. On this ground, among others, we are *Strict Baptists;* nor can a man be other than a *Strict Baptist*, who rigidly follows Mr. Walter's advice, and this, we presume, is the author's desire and object.

Tracts for the Thoughtful. No. 5. *God's Work and Ours.* London: W. Freeman, 102, Fleet-street, E.C. Pp. 42.

This tract or pamphlet, is evidently written by an able man, who, however, for some reason or other, withholds his name. It is pervaded by a candid spirit, but its main principles, if principles they may be called, are all the more dangerous from the candour and ability by which they are recommended to the world.

What may be the settled *secret* purpose of the writer,—whether or no he be one of that imposing but most treacherous school, whose partisans are just now running up and down the world exclaiming, "Christianity—churches—parsons—sermons—prayers—stand out of our way; you have not done *the work* and never will do it—stand aside, and without your Spirit, your prayers, or *your Bible*—WE will shew you "God's work and ours;"—whether he be one of these, or what is his covert aim we are in utter doubt.

For while the writer in some of his pages would fain have us to believe that at least he reveres the Bible, yet taken as a whole, he practically ignores God's book as a guide to the knowledge of "God's work and ours." As to the atonement it is never once mentioned, and the Holy Spirit is treated with an equal contempt. Unless we are mistaken, this writer would recommend that our *sole* guide for working in this world of ours should be found somewhere within the "DOMAIN OF NATURAL LAW."—P. 10.

Nor is this all, for he tells us with a singular, if not an impudent candour, bordering on the profanity of a buffoon, that "he cannot but feel more interest in

an act of generous self-devotion, done 'to the glory of the devil,' than in a selfish, covetous, sensual, or frivolous act, done 'to the glory of God.'" Can the obvious intention of this sneer deceive even a simpleton? Is it not most evident to any reader that it is of small moment to such a writer to whom devotion is rendered so that it be *properly* rendered? "An act of generous self-devotion, done 'to the glory of the devil!'" Who, with the faintest pretensions to piety could ever have allowed so profane a sentiment to escape his pen!

To such an author, preaching, *though a Divine ordinance*, must be below contempt, and but a mere trick of trade, employed for any but worthy purposes. Hence he says, "it is very clear that, by disregarding the influence of circumstances, we bring into greater prominence and importance the *talking trade*. I am very sure that, if a rational regard were paid to the influence of circumstances upon the moral and spiritual improvement of mankind, and if the religious world generally were to abandon all notion of employing supernatural agencies, the *talking trade*, as *the* instrumentality for the regeneration of mankind, would make a rapid descent in public estimation." What can it signify to this writer that the last command of the "King of kings" should have been "*Preach* the gospel to every creature!" or that the greatest men the world has ever seen went forth through the length and breadth of creation preaching "Christ and him crucified!" With this modern Solomon it is but the "talking trade;" and he, for one, would gladly see it die out of the world. In this spirit he appears to take pride, giving it vent in various other parts of his work, and even delighting in its display. Hence he finds "it hard to speak otherwise than in words of bitter scorn and unmeasured contempt" of such as teach "that the only thing God wants us to do for him in this world is to *sit* in his 'sanctuary,' to hear sermons and prayers, and sing praises, to build churches and chapels, and pay parsons." When, where, and by whom has this been taught as "the only thing God wants us to do for him in this world?" Let this writer produce his *proofs*, or stand convicted before the world as an anonymous slanderer. We know as much of the Christian world as most persons, and we hesitate not to say, on behalf of *all* sects and parties, that the above charge is a groundless calumny, which none but an ignorant though an able Secularist, would ever venture to make. But with a school that *virtually* abjures revelation, there remains no sure ground for moral obligation in any of the most common virtues of every-day life. When men abandon the Bible, calumny is invariably their most ready weapon of attack.

We will follow this writer no farther, although there remains ample scope for comment on his elegant "hotchpotch" caricature of public worship (p. 10), his sneer at "supernatural agencies" (p. 34), by which is meant prayer for the Holy Spirit and dependence on his gracious influence,—or his affected isolation, and artificial sentimentality at finding so few like himself, or blessed with such pure, lofty, disinterested sentiments respecting human good, as he and his. He, poor man, lives "alone amidst a universe of apes and unfledged bipeds called men,—alone amidst herds of two-legged swine."—P. 42. Poor man! He had better seek some other, for plainly our world is not good enough for so much *perfection*. Alas! that he—so pure and spotless—should be doomed to pass his days among "herds of two-legged swine."

Such is Secularism everywhere,—the religion of pride and self-conceit, boastful as the Pharisee, but lawless as Deism in its blackest phase. It lives by idle, though sometimes eloquent talk, and screens the poison of its principles under the dazzling beauty of the serpent's crest. And can this pernicious system—this "Satan transforming himself into an angel of light,"—impose on any thoughtful man, or any Bible-reading Christian? Yes, it can do all this and more, or a respected cotemporary would not on his cover of last month's issue, have ventured on the following misplaced recommendation of this pernicious tract: "'God's Work and Ours:' being No. 5 of Tracts for the Thoughtful. A sixpenny pamphlet, published by W. Freeman, 102, Fleet-street. The practical question, 'What is my work?' is nobly, powerfully, beautifully dissected. O that this benevolent, this philanthropic, this seeking-man's-good spirit might be more expansive." Surely our brother editor could never have *read* the work, or reading he must have *dozed*. This is the most charitable construction we can put upon the case, while we lament that in this instance at least the "Vessel" did not contain *heavenly* treasure. At such a period in our nation's history, and with a delusive Rationalism on every side threatening to sap the vitals of the Christian faith, of all evils that can befal the church that is the greatest, when the "Watchmen are blind;" or when "they cannot bark."—Isa. lvi. 10.

BRIEF NOTICES.

Aids to the Development of the Divine Life. By the Rev. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A. Nos. 8 and 9. London: Henry J. Tresidder, 17, Ave Maria-lane.

We can add nothing to our former opinion of these tracts. Their style is as good as their divinity is meagre. So far as Mr. Brown's system is concerned, there might never have been such a passage as this, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." Or "Ye must be born again." As we prefer plain Scripture to modern *improvements*, we must declare of Mr. Brown's productions that they are such as a Paul would have scorned to write.

Gospel Ordinances, &c. A Sermon by the Rev. J. E. CRACKNELL. London: R. Banks & Co.; G. J. Stevenson, 54, Paternoster-row.

An exceedingly useful discourse, which we hope will obtain a large circulation.

The Bible Union Quarterly for November, 1861, and February and May, 1862. American Bible Union, 350, Broome-street, New York.

This Society is doing a great work, and one in whose success every man of piety must warmly sympathise. To circulate "revised" copies of the Scriptures in the Karen, Chinese, Siamese, German, Italian, French, and Spanish languages, is an undertaking worthy of all commendation and support, and this the American Bible Union are doing. The deplorable civil war has somewhat reduced their finances, yet with unabated zeal they proceed with their work. Heaven grant that the olive-branch of peace may speedily wave over that troubled land, and the common curse of man retire to its own cavern'd home to "go out no more to deceive the nations."

Jesus the Soul's Need. By C. A. PORTER. London: William Freeman, 102, Fleet-street. Pp. 95.

Any young person would read this neat little book with profit. It is eminently adapted to benefit our juniors, and its easy style, and plain but useful observations, will tempt them to read on to the end.

Progress of the International Exhibition. By WILLIAM ANDERSON. The same publisher with the foregoing. Pp. 32.

This also is a useful little book on the great attraction of the day. It is a wise comment on the progress of society in the direction of peace, unity, and industry. These principles are inseparable from human happiness, and Mr. Anderson deserves credit for the reflections upon them contained in these pages.

Bicentenary Prize Essays. By JOSEPH ANGUS, D.D., and JOHN WADDINGTON, D.D. Pp. 76, and 136. London: Ward and Co., Paternoster-row.

These Essays, though widely differing in character and scope, are eminently adapted for usefulness at the present time. Dr. Angus on "Christian Churches," supplies some most valuable advice on topics of growing interest and importance; while Dr. Waddington on "Congregational Church History from the Reformation to 1662," gives in a condensed form an account of ecclesiastical struggles during an eventful period in our national annals. In the absence of extracts from either of the Essays, we very strongly recommend them both to the perusal of our readers.

Intelligence.

Foreign.

SOUTH AFRICA.

To the Editor of the Primitive Church Magazine

Graham's Town, June 13, 1862.

DEAR SIR,—Knowing that you and the readers of the *Primitive Church Magazine* take a deep interest in the spread, and the establishment of the Redeemer's cause, wherever the name of Jesus is proclaimed in all its sweetness and fulness to listening multitudes; we venture to send you a few lines from the place where heathenism in its darkest forms once prevailed, but where now the glorious gospel is preached, and sinners converted to God. Since the arrival of our beloved pastor, Mr. R. H. Brotherton, who came here about three months ago, and whom we believe God has raised up and eminently qualified for the important work of the ministry, and sent in answer to our fervent supplications to preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ in this far distant land, we have had gracious tokens of good: already has the blessed Spirit of God been pleased to arouse and awaken a spirit of watchfulness and prayer,

of zeal and of love, sinners that never wept for mercy before, have cried for mercy, and obtained it at the feet of Jesus.

May 25th, 1862.—Six believers have come forward to tell what the Lord hath done for their souls, and publicly avowed themselves on the Lord's side, before a large crowd of witnesses, and have not been ashamed to follow their despised Lord and Master through the baptismal stream, and are now on their way rejoicing; others are inquiring the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, and we believe the Spirit will complete the good work commenced in their souls. May the Lord still deign to bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us, prosper the work of his own hands, and encourage and strengthen the heart of our new pastor, by giving him again and again, seals to his ministry and souls for his hire, is the prayer of yours truly,

JAMES TEMLETT, } *Deacons.*
WILLIAM HOCKEY, }

CHINA.

"The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty."—Psalm lxxiv. 20.

HORRORS OF THE CIVIL WAR.

The "civil war" in the United States is a very harmless affair, compared with the horrors of civil war raging in this poor land. I have seen nothing in our papers from home, that gives any adequate idea of the civil strife here. Men, women, and children are indiscriminately butchered; and in some places, even the domestic animals and fowls are all slain and thrown into heaps,—not a living thing being left. This was the case recently in the province of Shan-tung, as witnessed by foreigners. Robbery, the wanton destruction of property, and the burning of cities and villages, mark the course of this revolution. Tens of thousands are led by their fears and their troubles to commit suicide; and tens of thousands more flee to the hills, if within reach, and there perish by starvation, or by sickness, induced by exposure and hunger. Probably as many perish by these causes as by the sword. The number of those who annually die from these causes in the parts where the war is prosecuted, probably, during the last two or three years, has exceeded a million. When Hangchow was taken, two years since, upwards of a hundred thousand perished. Many intelligent Chinese estimate the number as high as two, and even three hundred thousand. A still greater number lost their lives when Suchow was taken. In the taking of Kinghwa city and district, where the slaughter was much less than in most other places, fifty or sixty thousand perished. A much larger number lost their lives at Lan-chi and Pu-hong. The latter place, which made a stout resistance, was utterly destroyed, and the people nearly all put to the sword, the burning and carnage going on, it is said, for twenty days. I mention these places as specimens, being for the most part in this province, and within 200 or 250 miles of Ningpo. These places have not been such great sufferers, as those where they are taken, and retaken by the Imperialists, who slaughter and rob as freely as the rebels.

In justice to the rebels, it should be said, that they are comparatively lenient to those places that submit to them without much opposition. Moreover, most of the slaughter and robbery is often by local banditti, who rise up a little in advance of the advancing army.

It should also be borne in mind that the great mass of the rebel soldiery know nothing of Christianity beyond the name. None of their leaders can be regarded as real Christians; and they carry on the war in the customary manner of Chinese warfare.—*An American Missionary.*

CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE KARENS, BURMAH.

In a recent number of the *Oriental Baptist*, we found a most interesting sketch by the pen of Mr. Eugenio Kincaid, American Baptist missionary at Prome, of this remarkable people—their former history, so far as it could be ascertained, and the rapid progress which the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ has made amongst them, through the labours of the late devoted Judson, and his persevering colleagues and successors, during the past twenty-five years. We feel confident that all who desire the coming of the kingdom of God, will feel, on its perusal, increased confidence in the ultimate accomplishment of those ancient prophecies which predict the universal diffusion of the glad tidings of great joy.

"The first intimation of the Karen race in the annals of Europe is found in the travels of Marco Polo in the fourteenth century. In describing the races of the northern provinces of Burmah, he mentions the Karens as one of the most numerous; and in speaking of the country still farther north, he calls it the country of the Karens. I had an opportunity of

verifying the correctness of Marco Polo's information in 1837, during a trip up the Irrawaddy. After getting up 200 miles north of the royal city, I found the interior of the country everywhere inhabited by Karens. As far as opportunity offered, I inquired about the extent of the Karens, but could obtain little more than that they regarded themselves as the first and most extensive of all the races in the world. For the last 200 years Europeans have been visiting this coast, and trading in all the parts along the Martaban Gulf, and for nearly the same length of time Jesuit missionaries have been in Burmah, and yet there was no intimation that such a race as the Karens inhabited the interior in vast numbers; living remote from cities, and keeping at a distance from all the great rivers, and avoiding intercourse with strangers, they have been unnoticed. They are found in all the retired districts, and in mountain ranges along the eastern shore of the Martaban Gulf, and still east of the mountains in Siam, and then to the north along the Salween river, and all its tributary waters, as far as they have been explored. The Sittang valley, situated between the Salween and Irrawaddy, is known to be inhabited by vast numbers of them. During the first five years after they became known, very little was done for them. It was found that they had, in oral songs, some of the most singularly interesting traditions relating to the creation of the world, the origin of the human race, the apostacy of man, the loss of Divine knowledge, and promises in reference to their future enlightenment. All these scattered rays of light are in harmony with the Mosaic record, reaching back to the infancy of the human family.

When America was inhabited only by savages, and our ancestors in Britain and Germany were practising the most cruel and revolting forms of heathenism, the Karens stood firm in the great truth of one eternal God, the Creator of all things, and the only rightful object of adoration. From age to age they chanted songs of praise to Jehovah, and looked, as their songs directed, towards the setting sun, from whence white men were to come with the *good book*, and teach them the worship of the living God. Arbitrary power, surrounded by imperial pomp and splendour, has neither awed nor seduced them from their simple faith. The preservation of this widely-scattered people from the degrading heathenism, which darkens every part of this vast continent, is a great and unfathomable mystery of God's providence. They have seen dynasties rise and fall, age after age, and yet their faith has never failed them. Twenty-five years ago the great fact was proclaimed on the mountains of Tavoy, by one of their own race, that the white man had come and brought them God's book. *Ko tha byu*, the Karen apostle, did not preach in vain; some thirty followed him to the city, and there saw the tall, pale, and emaciated form of Boardman. He opened God's book, and expounded to them the things concerning Christ and his kingdom. In no long time they became the disciples of Christ; and when they were baptized, the dying Boardman, reclining on the margin of the stream, exclaimed, as he saw them rising from the baptismal waters, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.'"

CANADA.

SECTS, AND THEIR NUMBERS.

The leading Governmental journal gives the following list of religious bodies in Canada, taken from the recent census returns. It shows that of the whole population very nearly one-half of them are *Roman Catholics*.

Roman Catholics	1,200,865
Church of England	374,887
Methodists	372,154
Presbyterians	346,991
Baptists	63,319
Lutherans	25,156
Congregationalists	14,284
Mennonites and Tunkers	8,965
Quakers	7,504

The number of the Baptists here indicated, is much greater than the Baptist Almanack assigns, which for 1861 was only 14,082.

We presume all the figures denote the denominational population, not the church-members proper.

Provincial.

THE ASSOCIATIONS.

We report the statistics of a few of these gatherings. It would be an easy task to include others; but so large a proportion are "mixed," that we forbear. Be it far from us to judge other men, but we *must* rigidly adhere to the law, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." We know no other law, and if modern associations and churches presume to act on some others, we must regard them as having departed from the Lord's baptism in a particular essential to a true gospel

obedience. We can never consent to "sprinkling" instead of baptism; consequently we cannot say "God speed" to such as identify themselves with that stronghold of Popery by permitting its appearance at the table of the Lord.

Glamorganshire Association.—The circular letter is a valuable record of "The Welsh Baptists,—their history, position, and duty." It abounds with important historic detail, and proves that Baptists in Wales are not of yesterday. They existed among the Welsh mountains long before Popery, Episcopacy, or Methodism, had a being. In this one association there are 15,699 members, and 14,950 children in the Sunday-schools. During the year, the baptisms have been 1,083. It gives the total number of Baptists in Wales at 64,958, and the number of hearers *exclusive* of members at 75,155. It also contains the following important statement, which we earnestly commend to the notice of our associations generally throughout the British Empire:—"The Welsh Baptists have sometimes been condemned for being narrow in their judgment, and close in their practice, because they confine the privilege of church membership, and a place at the Lord's-table, to those only who are baptised on a personal profession of *faith* in Christ Jesus. We at once admit, and we glory in the admission, that *all* the Welsh churches, and all the churches in Wales, with five or six exceptions, hold to this form of doctrine and practice; yet, it is evident that God smiles upon them, and prospers their efforts while holding fast the practice of admitting none to the Lord's-supper but baptized believers,—those who have rendered a personal and voluntary obedience to the baptism of the gospel." The letter then proceeds to a comparison between Wales and Yorkshire, the population of the latter being in 1861, 2,033,051, and that of Wales including Monmouthshire, 1,286,495. Yet the number of members in Yorkshire amount to but 11,434, while that of Wales with a very much smaller population stands at 64,958. That is to say, in Yorkshire there is one Baptist to 178 of the population, but in Wales there is one in every 20, or nearly nine times as many to the aggregate population. Let none therefore despair of the *Strict* Baptist cause. In Wales they hold fast to the primitive truth and prosper abundantly; let British Baptists do the same, and they too will prosper in an equal degree.

Herefordshire Association, consists of 10 churches, 8 of whom reported their statistics. 27 have been baptized, 9 by letter, and 16 restored, total 52. The meetings this year were held at Ledbury, and are appointed next year to beheld at Ross.

Suffolk and Norfolk, Baptist Home Missionary Union, comprises 18 churches, with 2,456 members, 158 of whom have been baptized during the year. There are 52 village preaching stations; and the Sunday-schools contain 2,702 children, who are taught by 342 teachers. The meetings this year were held at Aldborough, and the next year are appointed at Walton.

Northamptonshire Association met this year at Bugbrook. The returns of last year give the total membership at 3,667, and the additions by baptisms and profession during the present year are reported at 235, against 237 in last year, and 220 the year preceding. We regret to say that in this Baptist district our churches appear to be too stagnant and inactive.

Midland Association.—This venerable body met at Birmingham, and the reported increase was *less* than that of last year, which amounted to 305, and the total membership to 3,197. The general tone of the letters (of course there were exceptions) was gloomy, or desponding; and some who were present at their reading, were ready to exclaim "Lord, increase *their* faith."

Yorkshire Association.—The meetings were held at Scarborough, but were not so well attended as usual. A thorough revision of several of the church books having been made during the year, 195 have been erased, leaving a net increase of but 89. The total membership reported last year in 64 churches amounted to 8,452, and the additions in the same period to 492. The returns for the present year show a still larger number of baptisms, and were upon the whole, encouraging.

BOROUGH GREEN.

RECOGNITION SERVICES.

The recognition services of the settlement of Mr. William Frith as pastor of the Strict Baptist church, Borough Green, were held on Tuesday, the 12th of August, Mr. James Mules, LL.B., stated the nature of a gospel church in the afternoon, with much earnestness and decision. After which, Mr. Frith made a statement of his call by grace, and the leadings of Divine providence in reference to his settlement over the church, giving at the same time an epitome of his doctrinal sentiments. A large number of friends partook of tea.

In the evening, Mr. W. Milbourne read the Scriptures and offered the recognition prayer. Mr. W. Stokes, of Manchester,

editor of the *Primitive Church Magazine*, addressed the pastor and people in a most appropriate and admirable manner from 1 Tim. iii. 15, and Heb. xiii. 17, which was received with great pleasure both by the church and those numerous friends who favoured us with their presence and sympathy. Brethren Mountford, of Sevenoaks, T. Field, of Malling, and Heigh, of Bessel's-green were present at the services. H.

SUNNYSIDE SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

On Saturday, July 26, 1862, the teachers and scholars of the Baptist Sunday-school, Sunnyside, held their annual festival—walking in procession through Crawshawbooth—to Mr. Cropper's field, on the hillside, where they were regaled with various innocent pastimes, accompanied with refreshments. This pleasant "outing" afforded great gratification to all parties concerned.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL SERMONS.

HEYWOOD, LANCASHIRE.—Sunday-school sermons were preached at the Baptist chapel in this town, on Lord's-day, July 27, by Mr. William Stokes, of Manchester. The day being beautifully fine, the attendance was numerous. The collections amounted to £62 19s. 7¾d.

General.

RULES FOR TRACT DISTRIBUTION.

(Respectfully recommended to Baptist Tract Distributors.)

"Let all things be done decently and in order."—THE APOSTLE PAUL.

"They that turn *many* to righteousness (shall shine) as the stars for ever and ever."—DANIEL.

"He which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."—THE APOSTLE JAMES.

RULES.

1. Cultivate much kindness of manner in *all* your conduct as a tract distributor.

2. Let your object be to "turn many to righteousness," even as the Lord shall give to every man.

3. Engage in your work with love to God, and with an entire dependence upon the Holy Spirit for success.

4. Conduct your work in a spirit of earnest prayer, that the Lord may bless you and make you a blessing.

5. Expect the Divine blessing in answer to fervent prayer—this is faith, and will encourage you.

6. Endeavour to bring neglected children to the Sabbath-school, and encourage them to attend regularly, and in time.

7. Never enter into controversy *of any kind* with those whom you may visit; but invite them kindly to the house of God, that as "faith cometh by hearing" they may obtain, through the Holy Spirit, the saving knowledge of everlasting things.

8. If you should meet with opposition, or be treated with rudeness, bear it in the spirit of Christian meekness, "*not answering again.*"

9. Take notice of any remarkable cases of ignorance, depravity, temporal distress, or of success in your work, that may be presented to your observation; and report them at the monthly meeting of distributors for the instruction, encouragement, or the prayers of all.

10. Make conscience of attending the monthly meeting of distributors held on the last Monday evening of each month, according to appointment.

11. Be persevering in your work: not soon weary in well doing.

12. Remember the Saviour's rule, "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work."

BAPTISMS.

HILL CLIFF.—On Sunday, August 3, our pastor baptized four candidates into the name of the Sacred Three—who, with six others from a distance, were received into church fellowship the same afternoon. May "the little one become a thousand."

PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, HACKNEY-ROAD, SHOREDITCH.—The Lord still continues to favour us with additions. There have been baptized this year:—Feb. 2, *two*; March 30, *seven*; May 25, *four*; June 29, *two*; July 27, *four*. Including the above, 31 have been added to the church during the year. E. J. O.

DEATHS.

Mrs. McFarland, of Newtownards, Ireland, fell asleep in Jesus on the 6th of July, in the seventieth year of her age. She was baptized by Mr. Mulhern, on the 20th of February, 1844, and during the entire period of her connection with the church at Conlig, has lived a most exemplary life. Originally, she belonged to the Wesleyan Methodists, and notwithstanding her change of views on baptism, &c., she still retained her partiality for the Wesleyan doctrine in general to the last. She was a *Strict* Baptist; but a sincere lover of all who love our Lord Jesus Christ. She was indeed a happy Christian, and delighted in making all happy with whom she had